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LITERARY CORRESPONDENCE.

GERMANY AND AUSTRIA.

The view which regards psychology as the groundwork of philosophy is by no means a recent one. The votaries of psychological research to-day, however, uphold this view in a slightly different sense from what was customary a hundred and fifty years ago. At that time thinkers were pervaded with the idea that it was possible to find in psychology, "as the natural science of inward experience," a court of last appeal for many hotly-agitated problems of epistemology and metaphysics. To-day considerable scepticism reigns among psychologists regarding the epistemological value of inward experience and self-observation; inquirers are now bent on introducing in their stead objective observation and experiment, and they value the investigations of psychology less for their *immediate* furtherment of other branches of philosophy than for the promising glimpses which they afford, for the first time, of exact though meagre results relative to laws of mental life. The use of experiment in psychological questions, in itself attractive, renders possible the union of several minds in the solution of accurately defined problems, as also the mutual verification of the whole subject under inquiry, of the methods employed, and of the results obtained. All this makes experiment appear as expressly designed for the professional pursuit of this branch of knowledge, according to the precedent of the other experimental natural sciences. The psychological laboratory has become one of the instruments of a well equipped university.

The more numerous and ramified, now, the special investiga-

tions growing out of this method become, the more imperative does the necessity appear of occasionally systematising and condensing the results. Such a rallying-point Wundt's *Physiological Psychology* has been since its first appearance. Each new edition has sought to keep pace with the latest researches. But plan and groundwork of any book constitute after all an intellectual organism, which, although it can develop as a whole, yet in individual parts cannot sustain its growth at the expense of the whole. Some such idea as this perhaps suggested OSWALD KÜLPE's *Lehrbuch der Psychologie*. After the fourth edition of Wundt's celebrated work and the second German edition of Höffding's *Psychology*, this is perhaps the most important collective treatise of the subject which we have.

A comparison with the two last-mentioned works will show clearly the character of Külpe's book. What distinguishes Külpe from Wundt is, briefly stated, the absence of a physiological and neurological part. He treats only of psychical phenomena; considering neurological phenomena only in so far as they are indispensable for an understanding of the experimental investigations. This is not a difference in point of view, at least as far as principles are concerned, but simply a division of labor. Külpe is a pupil of Wundt's, and upon the whole represents perfectly the latter's views, although deviating from him in minor details. Most of his earlier researches were prosecuted in Wundt's psychological laboratory and published in the latter's *Philosophische Studien*. The book may be termed, therefore, a direct positive outgrowth of the purely psychological part of Wundt's work. It contains a description and verification of experimental methods, and embraces the whole psychology of the senses, of representations, and of attention, throughout applying the vast stores of material accumulated by recent observations. The range of the book is precisely coextensive with that of the new experimental psychology, into the methods and results of which it affords a valuable insight. But we miss that rich and kaleidoscopic portrayal of the psychical life in all its manifold phases, that broad and deep outlook over the whole domain of philosophy, which the solution of psychological problems inevitably affords—all recognised merits of the expositions which Höffding,

and, within more modest limits, the editor of *The Monist* in his book *The Soul of Man*, have given.

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As an attempt at advancing psychology from the opposite side, namely, by purely neurological research, is to be noted a recent work by SIGMUND EXNER, the successor of Brücke to the chair of physiology in the University of Vienna. The author is already well known by his two essays in Hermann's widely used *Handbook of Physiology*, one of which treated of the cerebral cortex, and the other of the principal methods and results of psycho-physics. The first provoked considerable opposition; the second passes for an excellent survey of this difficult and intricate group of problems, although to-day it can no longer be regarded as exhaustive. Exner now appears before the public as the author of an undertaking which is likely to win the attention of every psychologist: *Entwurf zu einer physiologischen Erklärung der psychischen Erscheinungen*. (Part I, 1894.) The author regards it as his task "to trace back the most important psychical phenomena to the gradations of excitatory states of the nerves and nerve-centres, that is, to trace back everything that appears to us in consciousness as manifoldness, to quantitative relations and to differences of the central connexions of nerves and centres, in other essential respects homogeneous."

I am sorry to say that a deplorable misconception has crept into Exner's book, as some remarks of the introduction clearly show. Exner is bent on reducing psychical phenomena to neurological processes and imagines that, having succeeded in this, he will have explained them away as something superfluous, somewhat as the physiologists have done with vital force. What is the purport of this? Are the phenomena of consciousness a mere hypothesis which we make in order to explain to ourselves the physiological processes in the brain, or are they an immediate and certain fact,—indeed, the only immediate and certain fact that exists at all? The naïve materialism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries thought exactly as Exner does.

Exner confounds the notions "soul" and "phenomena of con-

sciousness." It is easy enough to explain away soul as an entity, just as we explain away vital force, or the *nisus formativus*, and other personified or hypostatized abstractions; but not consciousness and its phenomena. These could not be abolished, even if we should succeed in rendering perfectly intelligible the processes by which psychical phenomena are produced by transformation from molecular transpositions in the nervous fibres and nerve-cells. But, as a fact, science has abandoned even the search after this secret. The law of causality holds between physical and physical, between psychical and psychical. But psychical and physical are not causally connected together. What we have, are two aspects of one and the same actuality—an outward aspect and an inward aspect. This monistic theory demands, that every psychical act should have a physiological correlate in the central nervous system. For this indeed anatomy, physiology, and pathology have furnished overwhelming evidence in the course of the century. But we cannot rest content with this proof of the general functional dependence of psychical phenomena on the central nervous system. The processes of the central nervous system corresponding to the psychical phenomena must be exhibited in their actual relationship, and the general conception of the parallelism carried out in all its details. This is the sole practical and scientific sense of Exner's "explanation" of psychical phenomena. The general impression of Exner's work is, that neurology is still infinitely remote from what is here characterised as its main object. The phenomena of which he seeks to exhibit the neurological parallels, are voluntary movements and sensations, perceptions, representations, and acts of intelligence. It is certainly not an accident that in the same measure in which the book advances its contents grow more and more psychological and less and less physiological; that the part which introspection plays becomes greater and greater, the range of objective observation smaller and smaller, and the whole more and more theoretical. Exner is like a traveller who attempts to penetrate into a primitive forest without more than a general idea of the direction which he is going to follow. A hundred different paths besides his are possible. Before special research has erected a line of signs and guide-

posts any real enlargement of our knowledge on this road is scarcely to be expected.

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An exceedingly welcome enrichment of the historical literature of the philosophical disciplines is the *Geschichte der neueren deutschen Psychologie* by MAX DESOIR, Privatdocent in the University of Berlin. The first volume of this work appeared in 1894 and covers the period from Leibnitz to Kant. The second volume is to treat of the psychology of speculative German idealism, and the third of the development of German psychology from Herbart to the present time. In view of the extremely slow progress of the excellent work of Hermann Siebeck (Giessen) on the General History of Psychology, which has only just reached the threshold of the modern epoch, Dessoir's book meets an actual want of students.

The present volume, the result of indefatigable industry and of the collation of exceedingly rich materials, is an important contribution to the history of German rationalism and its philosophy, which although familiar in a general way, are very little studied in their detailed aspects. The author seeks to develop the psychological drift of this epoch from its historical and intellectual tendencies, and to follow out the effects of this psychology on the different directions of the intellectual life. Epistemology and æsthetics, morals, law and pedagogics, the systems of medicine, the general views of life which obtained in that period: these are the special objective points of his disquisitions.

Yet the historical import of the work is rivalled by its systematic significance. The comparatively close resemblance of the various systems suggested to the author the felicitous idea of rejecting a chronological treatment of his subject and of condensing together into two introductory chapters the purely literary and bibliographical matter, so as to leave space for elaborating the views of the various authors into a systematic exposition of the psychology of the period as a whole. He gives a chapter on fundamental problems, which is followed by the subject of animal psychology, the extremely important doctrine of the psychical faculties, in all its manifold phases, and lastly, by the associational psychology. The

different authors and schools are all made to speak in their turn. Each one of these chapters offers a picture of the whole cycle of doctrines and controversies of the period.

There is one feature of the work which will win for its author without doubt the gratitude of all foreign readers. He has incorporated systematically and premeditatedly in his work, as much of the original materials as was necessary to make his book an authoritative repository of the sources. This will be fully appreciated when we state that a large proportion of the vast literature which his book has made use of is not only forgotten, but, outside of a few German libraries like Munich, Göttingen, and Berlin, is also practically inaccessible.

Dessoir's book, now, may be characterised as a collection of systematically arranged excerpts from this literature. As such, it has not only a historical but also a material value for the psychologist. There is much patient analysis and excellent observation in the psychology of the last century, and precisely because the psychology of the present has entered upon totally different paths, much useful material for its systematic elaboration can be extracted from these old investigations.

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Still another special philosophical science has noteworthy novelties to show. I refer to *ethics*. Exceedingly rich is the work of GEORGE SIMMEL, Privatdocent in the University of Berlin, entitled *Einleitung in die Moralwissenschaft* (two volumes, Berlin, 1892-1893). We are informed by its subtitle that it is "A Criticism of the Fundamental Notions of Ethics," and in fact critical reflexions and psychological analysis by far outbalance the positive results, at least if we understand ethics in the old sense, which has prevailed almost universally until now, as essentially a normative science. The author, of course, is expressly opposed to such a conception of ethics. He is of the opinion that up to now ethics has not gotten beyond the stage of abstract generality combined with homiletic discourse and the reflexions of so-called practical wisdom. For Simmel further progress of this science is to be anticipated only from an historico-psychological treatment of its principles.

I have the impression that the author has in mind here a condition of ethics which did exist in the past, but which does not obtain at present, at least not universally. The task which French positivism began has become, through the application of the principle of evolution to ethics, a universal and unavoidable requirement. That task is the verification of the ethical norms by a broad and comprehensive induction, which shall exhibit clearly the facts of the moral history and the psychological inter-relationship of the individual and society. No one who will take up the new ethical works of Herbert Spencer and Leslie Stephen, of Laas and Jhering, of Wundt and Höffding, can possibly have the impression of standing before the abstract generality of a pure "ought," which had fallen, as it were, from heaven, or of listening to the proclamation of a "good" which has not found its justification in a retrospect over the whole historical and social development of humanity in the past.

The author is undoubtedly correct when he says that the advancement of ethics, such as we conceive it to-day, is dependent upon the development of science as a whole. Ethics is indeed not an isolated branch and needs for its construction the most varied materials, which must be gathered in the workshops of the psychologist, ethnologist, the historian, sociologist, and political economist. No one can be fruitfully engaged in all these fields at once. Yet, must we on that account renounce all claim to a universal elaboration and employment of these materials? This would be exactly the same mistake as saying that no discipline of logic nor theory of the methods of science could exist in the future, but only the methods of the separate branches; the same mistake that makes its appearance again and again in the belief that the time will come when philosophy will be ousted by the collective methods and results of the separate sciences. The more the division of the single spheres of knowledge is extended, the more will the necessity be felt of retaining or newly creating definite points of unity and reference.

Yet these doubts in the horoscope which Simmel casts of ethics do not impair the value of the researches which he himself offers. What he proposes is the exact description and analysis of all the

complicated psychical facts and processes which answer to a few fundamental ethical notions. Simmel investigates the following cardinal conceptions: duty, egoism and altruism, ethical merit and ethical guilt, happiness in ethics, the categorical imperative, the unity and conflict of ends. All these conceptions play in every systematic construction of ethics a more or less important part; but the form and manner in which they are viewed is in most cases determined by the general suppositions from which the systematic exposition starts. In this way some factors are strongly emphasised, others are neglected; ethical construction and true psychological connexion are not always in accord.

Simmel's contribution thus constitutes an outline of a thorough revision of our fundamental ethical notions. It is not a system, not even the rudiments of a system. His criticisms, however, are extremely suggestive, and will yield rich returns to a person who seeks not so much results as profundity. And that not alone for ethical questions. For this introduction into the science of morals contains, on the one hand, much less ethics than one would expect, and on the other, much more than what is strictly ethical. It reminds us in many respects of Schleiermacher's talented work of the year 1803: *Outlines of a Criticism of Past Theories of Ethics*, by which this thinker prepared the way for his systematic works in the province of morals, and did much important service toward the formation of ethical conceptions.

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Totally different aims are pursued by ALEXIUS MEINONG, Professor in the University of Graz, Austria, in his *Psychologisch-ethische Untersuchungen zur Werth-Theorie* (1894). Meinong's analysis, unlike that of Simmel, is not devoted to the critical examination of widely ramified and complicated relations of thought, but to the exact and determinate comprehension of a single, but central, problem. This problem may be briefly stated as follows: "It is proposed to analyse and describe as exhaustively as possible the conception of value, or *Werth*, in all the varied significance which this notion has for ethics; from which analysis all the fundamental forms of elementary moral judgments are to be derived." All considera-

tions of historical, anthropological, and evolutionary phenomena are here neglected. Nothing is sought except the simplest and most universal expression of the intrinsic laws of those special psychical phenomena which we call moral judgments.

The conception "moral" for our author is a special case of the more general conception "ethical." Meinong states the difference between the two notions as follows: "Ethics investigates what constitutes, particularly in mutual relations, the value of man for man." The object of moral valuation "is man's impersonal participation, determined by his will, in the weal and woe of his fellowmen."

It remains an open question whether this distinction can lay claim to any permanent value. It serves the author as a convenient means of sharply delimiting the subject-matter of his investigations. Within the domain thus marked off, which Meinong calls the province of the good and the bad *par excellence*, arises now a whole series of possible volitional relations which Meinong undertakes to conceive as a totality and to expound in general terms according to their various functional relations. Here is first discussed the opposition of *Ego* and *Alter*, the weal and woe of the one as well as the other. By the side of these fundamental relations stand four categories of moral valuation: the meritorious and the correct on the side of the morally good; the condemnable and admissible on the side of the morally bad. But above and beyond this, experience demonstrates that the combination of the fundamental relations *Ego* and *Alter*, weal and woe, are still far from sufficient for reaching moral valuations; that this would be possible only provided nothing but the end of a definite volition determined the issue of the moral valuation of the volition. Now this can scarcely ever come to pass in real life; for every effect has natural consequences, and to every definite end means belong which must be regarded as partial ends. If the functions indicated are to shape the full analysis of real moral judgments, the morally relevant subsidiary circumstances accompanying a definite act must also be taken into account. By employing, now, a scheme of symbolical notation for the various determinations mentioned, wherein letters are used as in algebra, or in algebraical logic, the author is enabled to express in unequivocal

and accurately determined formulæ universally valid scheme of valuation for moral acts in the narrower sense, viz., for the relation of the *Ego* to the *Alter* with respect to the good and the bad.

I regard these elements of mathematical ethics, understanding by this term the exact deductive and universally valid derivation of moral judgments from fundamental psychological notions, as the really new and valuable feature of Meinong's book. Valuable not because anything is made clearer by the mathematical mode of expression, but simply because the applicability of symbolical mathematical notation affords us the assurance, here as everywhere, that our thought has mastered the fundamental relations of the branch of knowledge in question in its widest universality, and that we are beginning to understand not merely individual and actual cases, but all possible cases. In addition, the careful analysis of the notion of value offers important contributions to the problem of eudæmonism in ethics, and the same is true of two chapters added at the close on "The Moral Ought," and "On Responsibility and Freedom" which similarly attempt to throw new light on much-mooted questions of the idea of value. All in all it is no easy reading; a book in whose ways of thought and exposition we must completely immerse ourselves if we are to derive any profit from it, but withal a work which scientific ethics cannot afford to pass by without notice.

Naturally, this question will suggest itself in the face of the limitations which the author has laid down, Is this method capable of such extension as shall enable us to treat by its aid not only the very elementary moral problems, but also those more difficult relations of things with which the real interest of ethical decisions is usually associated? I have in mind the conflicts between obligations of law and obligations of love, between the principle of welfare and the principle of evolution, and finally, the countless difficulties which grow out of the fact that the *Alter* whose relations to the *Ego* the simple formulæ of Meinong are in search of, is not necessarily an individual but may also be a totality, a nation, or even all mankind. It is just, however, to mention that the author is fully aware of the preparatory and elementary character of his

present performance, and that he has promised a treatment at some future time of the whole field of ethics by means of the principles here reached—an undertaking which we shall await the more eagerly as we know so well the difficulties and complexities of the problems to be solved.

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In connexion with these ethical investigations is to be mentioned, finally, the *System der Pädagogik im Umriss* which August Döring, formerly a practical educationist, now professor of philosophy in the University of Berlin, has recently published (1894). The present work may be regarded as a practical or technical sequel to a former work of the author's, entitled *Philosophische Güterlehre* (1888), which undertook to attack the problem of optimism and pessimism by exhaustive psychological investigations into the possibility and conditions of happiness, and which seeks a fresh justification for the old but much contested reconciliation between happiness and moral merit.

The present work may be regarded as the outcome of the idea that the possibility of happiness in this sense depends on the enhancement of the ethical culture of the individual, and that this in its turn is entirely the work of education. Döring comprehends the object of education in its broadest and noblest sense. His notion of education embraces the physical as well as the psychical development of man, breeding as well as instruction. It is his effort, apart from all actually existing conditions and educational arrangements, to portray a purely conceptual or rational ideal of such an education, which shall embrace all sides of man, and which he justly and with considerable pedagogical wisdom regards as concluded at the end of the fourteenth year. About this period, along the borders of puberty, man in his fundamental traits is pretty nearly formed and his self-education and preparation for his future calling now begins on the basis of what has been already acquired. Döring does not think highly of what is done nowadays in the way of education. He is of opinion that it cannot even be determined at present what education is capable of attaining and that because the true means of education cannot as yet be put into operation to their full extent.

The system of education which is here presented, in judicious and minutely elaborated sketches of even the most detailed parts, is conceived as existing in the general popular educational institutions of a future society in which the present defective and unregulated co-operation of parents and schools shall be replaced by the methodical and trained work of popular professional educators, among whom of course women have a place.

The author goes somewhat further than Plato in his ideal state. He demands that a perfect society should put the education of its children in the hands of persons qualified by nature and training for that task, from the very beginning of the child's life, and not let its education date from a fixed period. It is at bottom a socialistic idea. To do one's uttermost to afford to every creature that wears a human countenance equal chances and equal prospects in life, to equalise the sharp contrasts of nurture and treatment from the first breath of life,—all characteristics of the present state of affairs,—and to leave only the ineffaceable differences of innate and constitutional qualities. An educational Utopia, yet not in the form of a pedagogical novel, but in the dress of a most rigorous and sober system. However, it is not difficult to add in thought the picture of that state of society which contains within it the conditions of realising such a pedagogical ideal. This need not necessarily be a socialistic society, but certainly one in which the smallest social unit hitherto known, the family, shall have been deprived of the functions which it has exercised for thousands and thousands of years. A society in which for this very reason a thoroughgoing employment of women in the general organisation of callings shall present no more difficulties, and in which also the reasons which forced the society of earlier stages of civilisation to impress upon marriage the character of exclusiveness and indissolubility on grounds of justice, shall have largely disappeared.

Are we approaching such a goal? The question is not for discussion here. A literary correspondent is not called upon to be a prophet. I shall only remark that the value of this severely constructed and finished work of Döring's is entirely independent of the idea of a future realisation of a pedagogical Utopia. A finely

thought-out ideal always exercises a regulative influence on the relations of actual life, and the teacher as well as the educator will be able to learn much from Döring's work, even though he may regard an unqualified rationalisation and socialisation of education as neither possible nor desirable.

In closing I may be allowed to mention a work which no doubt will be received with sympathy by the readers of *The Monist*. It is a collection of popular lectures on the theory of evolution, and its significance for our general conception of life, which BENJAMIN VETTER, the well-known German translator of Herbert Spencer's *System of Philosophy*, delivered before a mixed audience at Dresden. As Vetter died shortly afterwards, these lectures were collected by a friend of his and published under the title of *Die moderne Weltanschauung und der Mensch* (1894). Instead of the final revision which Vetter himself had planned, was substituted an examination of the manuscript by Ernst Haeckel, whose pupil Vetter had been, and who has written a cordial preface on the author and his work. Haeckel refers expressly here to his booklet, *Monism as a Bond of Reconciliation Between Religion and Science*, which was written almost simultaneously with these lectures, and which sketched in broad outlines Haeckel's philosophical view of the world. The mere fact that the celebrated naturalist has expressly characterised Vetter's lectures as a completion and extension of this sketch, will be a sufficient recommendation of Vetter's book for all Haeckel's friends. With a great command of the collective results of natural science, which he understands how to make exceedingly plain, is united in him the endeavor to bring nearer to the human heart the monistic view of the world, which has been so often censured by its opponents for its lack of comforting power. His work is pervaded with the thought to which also *The Monist* is dedicated, that it is possible to shape scientific knowledge into a religion if we understand by this idea nothing more than the fervor and enthusiasm with which the vista into the cosmos and its eternal becoming and the place of man in the developmental process of nature fills us.

There are not over many books in German literature which undermine so inexorably the phantasms of the old myth-forming re-

ligions, and understand how to unite so sagaciously new ethical ideals with purely scientific conceptions of the world. And in a time when dualism and mysticism in the most varied forms are making such strenuous efforts to filch from humanity the results of that intellectual labor which has been achieved in the four centuries since the Renaissance, and, under the illusory pretence of a higher wisdom and a purer insight, to set us back into the childhood of thought, into illusion and superstition, such courageous and enthusiastic expositions are welcome allies to the friends of free thought and of a purely scientific view of the world.

FRIEDRICH JODL.

PRAGUE.

FRANCE.

The discourses pronounced at the French Academy afforded me occasion to speak of Taine. Two little books bring before us to-day the figure of Renan: one by M. RAOUL ALLIER, *La philosophie d'Ernest Renan*,¹ the other by M. GABRIEL SÉAILLES, *Ernest Renan, essai de biographie psychologique*.² The best way to comprehend these two opposed types of mind is comparison. Both shone at the same time in the firmament of French thought, and death took both away together—more cruel in the case of Taine, who had not achieved all that he gave promise of, and more kind in the case of Renan, whose decline was becoming apparent. The latter, too, had been a favorite of life. His first bold stroke had won for him celebrity, and he saved himself by a course which for others usually means ruin.

Rebels against the Church are sure to succumb in the struggle, unless they are fully emancipated. Renan was emancipated, and in his case rebellion was dispensed with. Taine was unable to de-

¹ F. Alcan, publisher.

² Perrin & Co., publishers.